

What Saith the Scripture?

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Salvation Always Conditional

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Text.--1 Cor. 10:12: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

In remarking upon this subject I will show:

I. What is intended by one's thinking that he standeth.

II. Show in what such a confidence may be founded.

III. That this confidence, whatever may be its foundation, cannot secure the soul against falling into sin and hell.

IV. That continued watchfulness and wakeful, activity of soul, are indispensable to continued holiness and final salvation.

I. What is intended by one's thinking that he standeth.

The original word rendered thinketh, in this text, is used, according to some distinguished commentators, not to weaken but to strengthen the sense. In Luke 8:18, the same word is rendered seemeth. Thinketh, in this text, means great confidence, a strong assurance; as if the Apostle had said--Let him that has great confidence, or a strong assurance that he standeth, take heed lest he fall.

II. In what such a confidence may be founded.

- 1. A person may be very confident of his own good state, in consequence of mistaken notions in respect to the natural goodness of his character.
- 2. He may feel great confidence, that he shall persevere in holiness, perform all his duty, and be saved, on the ground that he knows himself to be naturally able to obey God.

- 3. This confidence may be founded in a dependence upon our own discretion, and prudence, and wisdom, and zeal, in the cause of Christ.
- 4. It may be founded in a confidence in our experience. Persons are very apt to rely much upon their own experience; they suppose themselves to be more than a match, even for the devil himself, in cases where they have the light of their own past experience to guide them.
- 5. This confidence may be founded in the consideration of what God has done for us; in the fact, that He has so often given us grace to overcome temptation--and in the fact, that He has, perhaps for weeks, or months, kept us in a state of perfect conscious peace of mind, and given us entire exemption from any felt condemnation.
- 6. A man may be very confident that he standeth, because he believes himself to have been spiritually cleansed. He feels certain that God has renewed in him a clean heart, and a right spirit; and from this he draws the assured conclusion, that he shall not fall.
- 7. He may place great confidence in his purposed watchfulness. He feels so strong, and for the present, so steadfast a determination to watch unto prayer, and to pray in the Holy Ghost, that he feels a strong assurance of perseverance in holiness.
- 8. He may place great confidence in the great strength of his own faith. Indeed, persons are very apt, when in the exercise of strong faith, to suppose it next to impossible, that they shall ever again be guilty of unbelief. Especially is this true, if they are conscious, for a long time, of having exercised strong faith without any wavering.
- 9. This confidence may be founded in the fact, that we find ourselves to be dead to the influence of the world, and of the flesh, and, through grace, more than a match for the devil. When placed under circumstances in which we formerly found ourselves easily overcome, we may experience such a kind of supernatural strength, and find ourselves so lifted above the influence of temptation, as to be confident, that all our lusts and sins are for ever slain.
- 10. This confidence may be founded in the promises of God. We feel that we believe them. We know it at the time, with as much certainty as we know our own existence, and hence infer, and feel assured, that God will keep us for ever from falling under the power of temptation, and "preserve us faultless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

III. This confidence, whatever may be its foundation, cannot of itself secure the soul against falling into sin and hell.

- 1. Because, if it is founded in any thing naturally good in us, it is ill-founded of course.
- 2. If it is founded in what grace has already done for us, it is ill-founded; for however much grace may have done, it has not changed our nature. Our constitutional susceptibilities remain the same. It has not so changed our relations and circumstances as to exempt us from temptation; and consequently, nothing that grace has done, or ever will do for us, can render our perseverance in holiness unconditionally certain.

- 3. If this confidence is based upon our purposed watchfulness, prayerfulness, experience, or faith; these, independent of the sovereign grace of God, afford no such foundation for our confidence, as to render it at all certain, or even probable, that we shall not sin again.
- 4. If this confidence is based upon the promises of God, it will not render our perseverance unconditionally certain; because the promises of God are all conditioned upon our faith, and the right exercise of our own agency. This is a revealed principle under the government of God. Ezek. 18:21-29: "If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure at all, that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not that he should return from his ways, and live? But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel. Is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done, shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die. Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? Are not your ways unequal?" Ezek. 33:12-16: "Thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth. When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust in his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it. Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed, shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live." Jer. 18:7-10: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build, and to plant; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, than I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them."
- 5. Any confidence in the promises of God, either for sanctification or final salvation, that does not recognize this universal principle in the government of God, is ill-founded and vain; because God has revealed this as a universal principle of his government; and whether expressed or not, in connection with each promise, it is always implied. Overlooking this fact,

has often made the promises "a stone of stumbling" to those to whom they were given.

IV. Continued watchfulness, and wakeful activity of soul, are indispensable to continued holiness and final salvation.

- 1. This is evident from the fact, that moral government is a government of motives, in opposition to a government of force. Moral beings are not and cannot be forced, in the exercise of their moral agency.
- 2. The motives of moral government are suited and addressed to the constitutional susceptibilities of moral agents.
- 3. An analysis of the constitution of a moral being, as revealed to us by consciousness, will show that the motives calculated to influence moral agents may and must be divided into three classes:
 - (1.) Those addressed to hope, or the desire of happiness.
 - (2.) Those addressed to fear, or the dread of misery.
 - (3.) Those that move us to the exercise of disinterested love, or benevolence.

It is true, that should we enter more particularly into this subject, these classes of motives might be several times subdivided; but such subdivisions would carry me too far from my main design. I must, therefore, pass on to say--

- 4. That it is right to be influenced in a suitable degree, or to a certain extent, by each of these classes of motives.
- 5. It is impossible that we should not be influenced to a certain extent, by considerations that address our hopes and fears, if these considerations are apprehended by the mind.
- 6. Selfish minds are influenced wholly by hope and fear; or in other words, the motives that influence them to attempt obedience to God, are purely legal; that is--those that are presented in the sanctions of the law of God. This state of mind is sin.
- 7. The three classes of motives which I have named, or those that address our hopes and fears, and those that move us to the exercise of disinterested benevolence, are indispensable to fill up the circle of moral influences.
- 8. This is as certain as that the constitution of moral beings is susceptible of being influenced by these different classes of motives. We are conscious of possessing a nature adapted to the influence of these three classes of consideration. Unless, therefore, these three classes belong to moral government, and are indispensable to its perfection, moral government is not suited to the nature of moral beings.

- 9. The fact that conscience is a universal and indispensable attribute of moral agency, demonstrates the universal and unalterable necessity of these three classes of motives.
- 10. The Bible abundantly shows, that neither the present sanctification, justification, or final salvation of believers, is so unconditionally decided as not to need warnings, threatenings, reproofs, admonitions, and all those considerations belonging to these three great classes of motives.
- 11. God has shut up moral beings to a state of constant reliance upon Him for every thing natural and spiritual. We are to depend upon Him for our daily bread. He does not send an ocean of waters upon the earth at once, but has shut us up to depend upon Him for rains in their season. He does not give food enough at once to last a man all his life time. He so arranges his providence, as that, ordinarily, just about food enough for man and beast, is produced from year to year. In short, He so distributes his temporal favors as to make mankind see and feel their constant dependence upon Him.

This is equally true of spiritual blessings. He gives grace only from day to day, from hour to hour, and from moment to moment. He gives to no man a stock of grace upon which he can depend in future, without a constant reliance upon God, and a continual abiding in Christ. He deals with no man in spiritual things in such a manner that he can say to his soul, "Soul, thou hast much spiritual goods laid up in store for many years." But he has made continual reliance upon Christ indispensable to perseverance in holiness.

- 12. This course of procedure on the part of God, both in respect to natural and spiritual blessings, is naturally and unalterably indispensable to continued holiness. Suppose that God should cause food enough to grow in one year to last mankind a century; so that every man could say, in truth, "I have much food laid up in store for many years;" would not such a procedure manifestly tend to a spirit of infidelity, to destroy a sense of dependence upon God, and beget among mankind a general forgetfulness and neglect of God. Who cannot see, that should the arrangements of providence be such as to make mankind feel, that all their temporal wants are already provided for, for a century, or for centuries to come, that it would ruin the world?

Just so in regard to spiritual things. If by regeneration, God really did, as some have supposed, change the very constitution of the soul, introduce, or implant within the soul a holy principle, that becomes a part of the constitution itself; in short, if He so remodded [sic.] the faculties, or made any such constitutional change whatever, as to beget the impression, that the constant indwelling, abiding influences of the Holy Spirit, are not essential to continued holiness, it would of course be the cause of universal backsliding and alienation from God.

- 13. It is, therefore, indispensable to continued holiness, that the mind should be shut up to a state of constant reliance upon the grace of God. And nothing can be more absurd, fanatical, or dangerous, than the idea, that our perseverance in holiness, or final salvation, can be rendered unconditionally certain.

- 14. It is naturally impossible for God to create a being, who can be for one moment independent of Himself. In Him all beings must "live, and move, and have their being."
- 15. To the fact that neither justification, sanctification, nor final salvation, can be unconditionally secured in this life, by any act of ours, or by any grace received; and that, therefore, continual watchfulness and wakeful exertion, and fear of falling, are indispensable to continued holiness--it is objected, that "perfect love casteth out fear." To this I answer:
 - (1.) This cannot mean, every kind and degree of fear; for a certain kind and degree of fear is universally insisted on, not only as a duty, but as constituting an essential element of holiness. Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." 2 Cor. 7:1: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Eph. 5:21: "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." Ps. 2:11: "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling." Mat. 28:8: "They departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy." Phil. 2:12: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Gen. 22:12: "He said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, for now I know that thou fearest God." Ps. 112:1: "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments." Ps. 128:1: "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways." Prov. 28:14: "Happy is the man that feareth always; but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief." Col. 3:22: "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God." 1 Pet. 1:17: "If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." Heb. 12:28: "We receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear."
 - (2.) One of the characteristics of wicked men, is, that they fear not God.
 - (3.) Love casts our slavish fear, but not that kind of fear that consists with love. The foundation for the exercise of which is laid in the very constitution of our being.

REMARKS.

1. No one act of faith, nor any other exercise, can render salvation from sin or hell unconditionally certain. This is manifest from the fact, that warnings and threatenings are every where addressed to the saints; which would be absurd, if their justification or sanctification were already unconditionally certain.

2. It is a capital mistake, and a dangerous error, to maintain, that one act of faith brings the soul into a state of unconditional and permanent justification. That this view of justification cannot be true, is manifest from the following considerations:

(1.) If the believer is so justified, as not to come under condemnation if he sins, it must be because the law of God is abrogated. Some have maintained, that the penalty of the law is

for ever set aside in his case, on the exercise of the first act of faith. Now if this is true, then, as it respects him, the law is in fact abrogated; for a law without a penalty is no law. If the penalty is, as to him, for ever set aside, in such a sense that he may sin, and yet not be condemned, and subject to that penalty, to him there is no law. The precept is only counsel or advice, as distinguished from law. But if the law is set aside he has no rule of action--no obligatory standard of duty with which to compare himself; and he can, therefore, be neither sinful nor holy, any more than the brute.

(2.) That a believer is not unconditionally and permanently justified by any one act of faith, is evident from the fact, that every believer feels condemned in his own conscience, when he sins. And if our own conscience, or heart, condemn us, is not God greater than our heart--and shall not He condemn us? "Shall mortal man be more just than God?"

(3.) The believers are not unconditionally and permanently justified by one act of faith, is plainly asserted, in Ezek. 18:21-29, and 33:12-16, [as quoted under the fourth division of the third head of this lecture.] Nothing can be more in point than these passages of scripture. For here it is expressly affirmed, that "if a righteous man forsake his righteousness, his former righteousness shall not be remembered;" but "in his sin that he sinneth shall he die."

To this it is replied, that these and similar passages are hypothetical--that they do not assert, that any righteous man will fall from his righteousness; but only, that if he should, he would be condemned. I answer:

That this is the very thing for which I am contending. I admit, that these and other kindred passages are hypothetical, and insist that for this very reason, they flatly contradict the proposition, that by one act of faith believers are unalterably and unconditionally justified. They make the condition of continued justification to be, continued obedience; and the condition of perfect justification to be, perfect obedience.

(4.) That one act of faith does not permanently and unconditionally justify the believer, is evident from the fact already alluded to, that the Bible every where abounds with warnings, reproof, encouragements, and every possible inducement to perseverance in holiness to the end--every where making the condition of final salvation to be, continuance or perseverance in holiness to the end of life.

To this it is objected, that these threatenings, warnings, &c., are the means by which the saints are caused to persevere in holiness.

Yes, truly, I answer, so they are. And this very fact proves, that they are not unconditionally or permanently justified, and, that they are justified no farther than they are sanctified. For what could all these warning and threatenings amount to--why should they be recorded--or what possible influence could they have, upon the supposition that they are already perfectly, permanently, and unconditionally justified, and that, therefore, their final perseverance and final salvation are already unconditionally secure? Indeed, it

is absurd to say, that by one act of faith, they have become unalterably justified, and yet, that only upon certain conditions, viz: their persevering to the end, can they be saved.

(5.) That believers are not, by one act of faith, brought into a state of permanent or unconditional justification, is evident, from the manifest tendency of such a sentiment. This is asserting, in its most objectionable form, the sentiment so often attributed to Calvinists by our Methodist brethren--that if a man is once converted he will be saved, however much he may backslide, and even should he die in a state of utmost backsliding.

3. The certain knowledge and belief of unconditional salvation from sin, or hell, or of unconditional justification and salvation, would break the power of moral government, and insure a fall. It would destroy the balance of motives, and nullify entirely the power of that class of motives that are addressed to the hopes and fears of men. What, I pray you, would all the warnings of the Bible avail to sustain the virtue of a man, who already knew himself to be in a state of unconditional salvation from sin, condemnation, and hell? Do you answer, that he does not need them, and that all regard to them would be selfishness. I ask, why then, are they found in the Bible, actually and every where addressed to the saints?

To this it may be replied, that a sanctified soul is influenced by love, and not at all by hope and fear. I answer:

It is true, that love is the mainspring of action; but it is also true, that both the hopes and fears of men sustain such a relation to moral government, as that considerations addressed to them, make up an indispensable part of those influences that sustain the soul in a course of steady obedience.

To this it is objected again, that those saints who have believed themselves to be in a state of unconditional justification, and who have had the felt assurance of their final perseverance and salvation, have not found that this felt assurance was a stumbling-block to them; but have felt sustained in virtue by this very consideration. To this I answer:

That if, by the faith of assurance is meant, our assurance of final perseverance in holiness, and consequent salvation, I can easily see, that such an assurance would not be a stumbling-block to the soul. But, mark, this is not an assurance of unconditional justification. For, saints who have this assurance, have universally believed, that their justification and salvation were conditioned upon their continued holiness. They have believed that if they fall into sin, they are condemned, and that, should they die in their sins, or in a backslidden state, they would be damned. Their belief and assurance have been, that they should, through grace assisting them, be enabled so to exercise faith and persevere in the use of their powers of moral agency, as to be finally justified and saved. This assurance is eminently calculated to encourage them in all ways of well-doing, and in the most strenuous efforts to perfect holiness in the fear of God. But suppose they get the idea, that they have so believed in Christ as to render their continued holiness, their permanent justification, and final salvation, unconditionally certain--this is an eminently dangerous and ruinous belief, and is, as far as possible from any state of mind encouraged by the word of God.

4. Moral beings cannot be in a state of unconditional sanctification or justification, in any world. This is manifest, from the fact, that they cannot be put beyond the natural possibility of sinning. If they

were, they would be put beyond the possibility of being holy. Holiness implies moral liberty. Moral liberty implies the power of doing right or wrong. It is, therefore, naturally impossible, that moral beings should in any world be placed under circumstances, where their eternal justification, sanctification, and salvation, are unconditionally certain. The continued justification of the inhabitants of heaven, must be for ever conditioned upon their continued holiness. And their continued holiness must ever depend upon and consist in the right voluntary exercise of their powers of moral agency. And nothing but that grace which is perfectly consistent with the exercise of their own liberty, can render their final perseverance certain.

5. "Fearing always," or "passing the time of our sojourning here with fear," as the Apostle commands, does not imply unbelief, and is not a sinful state of mind; because the promises of God are all conditional--and as the promises of sanctification are conditioned upon our own faith, and the promises of justification conditioned upon our sanctification, and as all is suspended upon the right use of the powers of moral agency which we possess, it behooves us to "fear always--to walk softly, to gird up the loins of our minds, to be sober, vigilant, and to run with patience the race set before us."

6. The assurance that we shall never sin again, does not secure us against sin, and has, in this world of severe temptation, a manifest tendency to procure our fall.

7. Nor does a fall, in such a case, in the least degree tend to prove, that there is no such state as that of permanent sanctification in this life.

8. Nor does it impeach the veracity of Christ. Some persons have supposed, that they have attained a state of permanent sanctification, and felt assured that they should never sin again. They maintained that the veracity of Christ was pledged in such a sense, that He would be guilty of falsehood, if He should suffer them to fall into sin; and especially have they inferred this from the fact, that some promise that Christ would keep them, had been deeply impressed upon their own minds. Afterwards, however, they have fallen into sin, and been greatly tempted to entertain hard thoughts of Christ, to impeach his veracity, and deny his truth.

Now the mistake in this case was, in overlooking the fact, that all the promises of Christ are, from their very nature conditioned upon the continued exercise of faith in us. Misunderstanding the promise, and leaving out of view the condition, was the foundation of the assumption, that Christ was pledged for your perseverance in holiness; and if you have fallen into sin the blame is your own. You expected of Christ what He has never promised, except upon a condition that you have not fulfilled.

To this view of the subject it has been objected, that if this is true, the promises of the gospel amount only to this, that Christ will keep us if we will keep ourselves. To this I answer:

That in a very important sense this is true. I have formerly felt this objection strongly myself, and was strongly inclined to, and even entertained an opposite opinion. What, I said, can the promise of the gospel mean nothing more than this, "I will keep him who will keep himself?" Much consideration and prayer, with searching the word of God, have led me to the conviction, that this is the exact truth, and this opinion is in exact keeping with the whole providential government of God.

Take all temporal blessings. Who does not know that all the promises of daily bread, are so conditioned upon the use of indispensable means, as that they amount to this-- "I will feed him who will feed himself; I will take care of him who will take care of himself." Take all the promises that respect the things of this life, and the same will be found to be true. If God promises health, it is upon the condition, that we obey the laws of our physical existence; so that the promise amounts to this-- "I will keep him who will keep himself in health." If He promise to prolong our natural life, it is upon condition that we comply with the indispensable laws of life. So that the promise amounts to this-- "I will keep him alive who will keep himself alive."

Now the same is emphatically and eminently true of all spiritual blessings. Who does not know, that as a matter of fact, every believer progresses in religion precisely in proportion to his own faithfulness--that God keeps him from falling, when he watches, and thereby keeps himself from falling--that he has the spirit of prayer, in proportion as he watches unto prayer, and prays in the Holy Ghost--and that, as a matter of fact, He keeps the saints, only through their own watchfulness, faithfulness, and efforts. So that it may be truly said, that He keeps those only who will keep themselves--that He saves those only who will save themselves. Nor does this in the least degree set aside, or depreciate the grace of God; nor at all deny or set aside any correct idea of the sovereignty of God. Who ever supposed, that the farmer, who tills his land, the mechanic, who plies his trade, or the student, who trims his midnight lamp, either denies or sets aside the sovereignty of God, in accomplishing the ends at which he aims. Indeed, the sovereignty of God consists in this--in bringing about the great ends of his government, through the agency of his creatures; and no correct idea of his sovereignty will ever leave out of view, the use of the natural and indispensable means of procuring the things which He has promised.

9. Nor does this view of the subject at all touch the question of the perseverance of the saints, as I understand that doctrine to be taught in the Bible. The doctrine there inculcated, if I understand it, is not, that by one act of faith men are brought into a state of unconditional and unalterable justification; but that the saints, through the grace of God, will be kept in ways of obedience, to the end.

10. Although there can be no unconditional certainty of perpetual holiness, justification, or final salvation, in any world, yet we can have such a kind of assurance of all these, as to cast out all slavish fear, that hath torment. Think you not, that the angels know, and saints in heaven know, that if they should sin, they would be sent to hell? And think you not that they know they have power to sin, are liable to sin, and that without watchfulness, and wakeful activity, and perseverance, they will sin? They must know this; and yet, this knowledge does not bring them into slavish bondage; but affords just that healthy and holy stimulus to holy perseverance, that is demanded by the very constitution of moral agency, in any world.

11. Sanctification, justification, and final salvation, are all put upon the same ground. And it cannot be true, that men are justified, any farther than they are sanctified; or that they are, or ever can be saved, any farther than they are cleansed from sin. Gospel justification is generally defined to be pardon and acceptance. But can a man be pardoned, any farther than he is penitent? Can the soul be accepted any farther than it is obedient? Certainly it cannot be, unless Antinomianism is true, and the law of God is abrogated. The distinction, then, that is commonly made, (which I, following the current of the Church, without sufficient examination, once held myself,) between instantaneous justification and

progressive sanctification, must be without foundation. Every man feels that he is condemned, and not justified, when he sins, and that he is kept out of condemnation only by keeping out of sin. This is the doctrine of the Bible. It is the doctrine of conscience and of common sense. And that is certainly a most licentious view of the doctrine of justification, that maintains that justification is perfected while sanctification is imperfect; that justification is instantaneous, while sanctification is progressive.

Beloved Christian brother, why do you pray for forgiveness when you sin? Is it not because you feel condemned? But if you were already perfectly and permanently justified, you are mistaken in praying for forgiveness; for you are already forgiven, and not condemned. You cannot possibly be pardoned, unless you are condemned; for what is pardon, but setting aside the execution of law? If, therefore, men are permanently justified by one act of faith, they not only have no need of pardon from that moment, however much they may sin, but to pardon them is impossible, as they are not condemned. And why, let me ask you, should Christ teach you to pray daily for the forgiveness of your past sins, if by one act of faith, you are permanently justified? Let me conclude, then, by saying, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

GLOSSARY

of easily misunderstood terms as defined by Mr. Finney himself.

Compiled by Katie Stewart

1. **Complacency, or Esteem:** "Complacency, as a state of will or heart, is only benevolence modified by the consideration or relation of right character in the object of it. God, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and saints, in all ages, are as virtuous in their self-denying and untiring labours to save the wicked, as they are in their complacent love to the saints." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE VII)*. Also, "approbation of the character of its object. Complacency is due only to the good and holy." *Lectures to Professing Christians (LECTURE XII)*.
2. **Disinterested Benevolence:** "By disinterested benevolence I do not mean, that a person who is disinterested feels no interest in his object of pursuit, but that he seeks the happiness of others for its own sake, and not for the sake of its reaction on himself, in promoting his own happiness. He chooses to do good because he rejoices in the happiness of others, and desires their happiness for its own sake. God is purely and disinterestedly benevolent. He does not make His creatures happy for the sake of thereby promoting His own happiness, but because He loves their happiness and chooses it for its own sake. Not that He does not feel happy in promoting the happiness of His creatures, but that He does not do it for the sake of His own gratification." *Lectures to Professing Christians (LECTURE I)*.
3. **Divine Sovereignty:** "The sovereignty of God consists in the independence of his will, in consulting his own intelligence and discretion, in the selection of his end, and the means of accomplishing it. In other words, the sovereignty of God is nothing else than infinite benevolence directed by infinite knowledge." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LXXVI)*.
4. **Election:** "That all of Adam's race, who are or ever will be saved, were from eternity chosen by God to eternal salvation, through the sanctification of their hearts by faith in Christ. In other words, they are chosen to salvation by means of sanctification. Their salvation is the end- their

sanctification is a means. Both the end and the means are elected, appointed, chosen; the means as really as the end, and for the sake of the end." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LXXIV)*.

5. **Entire Sanctification:** "Sanctification may be entire in two senses: (1.) In the sense of present, full obedience, or entire consecration to God; and, (2.) In the sense of continued, abiding consecration or obedience to God. Entire sanctification, when the terms are used in this sense, consists in being established, confirmed, preserved, continued in a state of sanctification or of entire consecration to God." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LVIII)*.
6. **Moral Agency:** "Moral agency is universally a condition of moral obligation. The attributes of moral agency are intellect, sensibility, and free will." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE III)*.
7. **Moral Depravity:** "Moral depravity is the depravity of free-will, not of the faculty itself, but of its free action. It consists in a violation of moral law. Depravity of the will, as a faculty, is, or would be, physical, and not moral depravity. It would be depravity of substance, and not of free, responsible choice. Moral depravity is depravity of choice. It is a choice at variance with moral law, moral right. It is synonymous with sin or sinfulness. It is moral depravity, because it consists in a violation of moral law, and because it has moral character." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE XXXVIII)*.
8. **Human Reason:** "the intuitive faculty or function of the intellect... it is the faculty that intuits moral relations and affirms moral obligation to act in conformity with perceived moral relations." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE III)*.
9. **Retributive Justice:** "Retributive justice consists in treating every subject of government according to his character. It respects the intrinsic merit or demerit of each individual, and deals with him accordingly." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE XXXIV)*.
10. **Total Depravity:** "Moral depravity of the unregenerate is without any mixture of moral goodness or virtue, that while they remain unregenerate, they never in any instance, nor in any degree, exercise true love to God and to man." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE XXXVIII)*.
11. **Unbelief:** "the soul's withholding confidence from truth and the God of truth. The heart's rejection of evidence, and refusal to be influenced by it. The will in the attitude of opposition to truth perceived, or evidence presented." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LV)*.